

Kathmandu -- Today, USAID joins the Government of Nepal and international and local partners in commemorating World Tuberculosis (TB) Day. Worldwide, deaths from TB have gone down since 1990, but the disease continues to claim more than 1.6 million lives each year.

With HIV/AIDS claiming over 2 million lives each year, and malaria killing more than 1 million, TB is one of the three leading causes of deaths worldwide due to infectious diseases. About 10 percent of TB patients are also co-infected with HIV, and TB is the leading cause of death for AIDS patients. USAID programs are fully aligned with the new STOP TB Strategy, which gives attention to issues including TB/HIV-AIDS and Multi-drug Resistant TB.

“Even though a cure has existed for more than 50 years, tuberculosis continues to have a devastating impact on humankind,” said Mission Director Beth Paige. “Today, as we commemorate World TB Day we are correctly reminded that TB Anywhere is TB Everywhere. USAID is fully committed to bringing TB under control worldwide.”

Between 2000 and 2007, USAID provided nearly \$600 million for TB programs worldwide. In FY 2008, USAID will increase funding to \$15 million to the STOP TB Partnership's Global TB Drug Facility, an important mechanism that provides drugs to countries in need.

The United States Government also supports TB control worldwide through funding provided to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, whose TB programs are active in Nepal. The US Government is the largest single donor to the Global Fund, with pledges exceeding \$2.1 billion through 2008. Seventeen percent of support for the Global Fund has been dedicated to TB work.